

# THE GOSPEL MESSENGER,

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FOR THE GOSPEL MESSENGER.

### ST. PHILIP'S CHURCH.

*To the Editors of the Gospel Messenger—*

Some extracts are sent, agreeably to desire, from the Sermon delivered at St. Michael's, on the Sunday following the lamentable destruction of St. Philip's Church, by fire. If even these fragments of the Sermon, or more properly, the Address, do not very unnecessarily at least, occupy the pages of your work, more of it certainly would.

N. B.

*Ezra, i. 5-6.*

Then rose up the chief of the fathers of Judah and Benjamin, and the Priests and the Levites, with all them whose spirit God had raised, to go up to build the house of the Lord, which is in Jerusalem. And all they that were about them, strengthened their hands with vessels of silver, with gold, with goods, and with beasts, and with precious things, beside all that was willingly offered."

\* \* \* \* \* "There is no need of your being detained with any particular exposition of this language. It carries on the face of it the evidence of the unanimous purpose of all whom it interested, to strengthen the hands of those to whom the work of rebuilding the temple of Mount Zion had specially been assigned, and thus brings before us an example which circumstances loudly call on us to follow. All, at least, who bear our Christian denomination, of whatever rank or description in the Church, are interested in the restoration, so far as it may be practicable, of the venerable edifice, over whose ruins our city is in tears. It concerns not those alone, who worshipped there, but all whether ministers or people, whether high or low, whether young or old, of our communion, that its offices, be replaced in the now desolated sanctuary. There are none among us, to whom their influence, has not, more or less extended. There are none among us, who may not, more or less, again share the benefits which they are appointed to diffuse. Let me be permitted, in some manner, to show you the reasons of the plea addressing itself thus alike to all, for the venerable Church, so long the chief ornament of our city, and the pride of our communion, now a melancholy mass of ruins. The purpose of its restoration has with a praiseworthy promptness of determi-

nation been taken up, by those the most immediately interested. From all their brethren, they ask the help which it is in their power to give, and which it is certain that they need at their hands. The reasons for which it should be given, are obvious and irresistible."

"First, they are our brethren, for whom we should do this; Christian people, allied to us by the interesting tie of a common faith and worship. We cannot consistently with our Christian character, be insensible to their distress. It is a precept as obligatory, as any, in the whole code of evangelical duties, "if one member suffer, let all the members suffer with it." Where the faith of the Son of God has taken its effect upon the heart, indifference to the distress or sorrow of another in the bonds of that faith, is not in any case, to be supposed. The Christian character were deplorably defective, without the charity, that "weeps with them that weep," and makes haste to contribute to their consolation. To all that affects the happiness, welfare or peace, of individual life, this principle applies; nor can your sympathy be withheld from a brother's sorrow, without offence against the law to which you and he, alike are subject. In a social point of view, the obligation of this sympathy is equally apparent and indispensable. Our brethren composing, in any regular collective association, a part of the *household of faith*, have a claim which Christ has sanctioned, and we cannot dispute."

"The calamity which our brethren have sustained, is a real calamity, great in its amount, and demands a *real sympathy* evincing itself in the most effective consolation we can minister. They are driven from the temple which their fathers hallowed to the name and glory of the Redeemer; and their cry is in our ears, while, as in the language of the prophet, they lift up their voice to him, in whom, sorely as his hand is upon them, is still their trust, saying, "Our holy and our beautiful house, where our fathers praised thee, is burned with fire, and all our pleasant things are laid waste." *For these things they weep; for these things they are in heaviness;* and for these things, we and all their brethren, are summoned to show, by our works of love, the *reality* of the relation we hold to Christ, and to his members. The aged and the venerable, bending under the weight of years, and waiting on God in his temple, for the grace which should sustain their souls, as they tottered to the tomb; the afflicted and the mourning, to whom the bitterness of life's experience had been accustomed to be lost in the prospect and the anticipation of the heavenly rest, for which they had not gone in vain to the *mercy seat* of God, in his own hallowed house, by the side of their beloved and lamented dead; the young, and those of earliest fitness for their instruc-

tion, whom the Lord's day gathered in happy, cheerful crowds to the lessons of sacred knowledge; the humble and the lowly who were bidden freely to the privileges of the sanctuary, and were cherished, comforted, *established in every good word and work*, and made to rejoice in its benevolent ministrations, these all alike, claim our concern, because of the visitation, which has forced them from their customary and beloved religious resort. They are of us, and we of them, as *members of one body, which is Christ*; and to their relief and consolation, we cannot but be impatient to bring the share which is in our power."

"But for the Church's as well as for our brethren and companions' sake, who are *with us*, its members, we and all others alike, who truly love and rightly estimate the Church, are called to this united work of sympathetic zeal. In the venerable institution, of whose sorrow we are called to partake the burden, we recognize a branch of the communion, of which we are part, of more than ordinary importance to its general interest and welfare. The first Church of our denomination founded\* on this part of the shores of Colonial America, it has from an early period of our history, conspicuously borne the impress of the sound and excellent character of Christian doctrine, worship, and discipline, which, apart from all, that is the result of civil alliance, makes the Church from which its existence was derived, the pride, and strength, and chief earthly bulwark of Protestant Christianity. The principles of primitive Christianity, in all their sound and happy moral influence, *first taught in the Provincial Grant*, which providence subsequently gave to our independent possession, were *here taught*, to the predecessors of those who are now our afflicted brethren. They have been transmitted by their instrumentality, as they first were learned in that sacred place, to the present generation; and in no instance whatever, could I point to a fidelity in their maintenance, greater than that, which even to this their day of calamity, has characterized the ministry there employed. It were not easy, it is believed, to find anywhere within its now comprehensive limits, a single congregation of our Church, which in numbers and character, could be esteemed of more importance to its general honour and prosperity, than this. Alive to these, its numerous members have always been found, by the call of their ministers, ready to contribute to their advancement— \* \* \* nor have the old paths of scriptural, sober, vital, effective piety,

\* The first site of St. Philip's Church, was where St. Michael's Church now stands, where a wooden building was erected in 1681 or 2.\* It was changed for that where the Church stood, until lately destroyed, in 1710-11. The noble edifice here erected, was not finished until 1723. It is believed to have been in use several years before it was completed.

been any where pursued with a more firm and constant step, than here."

"For the sake, let me remind you, thirdly, of the common interest among us, of Christian truth and knowledge, as well as that of our peculiar principles of them, we are called to feel the claim, which is preferred on our united zeal of charity. Can we look at the ruins of a Christian temple, where so many worshipped, where the doctrine and its evidence, the practice and its indispensable obligation, of the religion of the Son of God, were taught, and enforced on so many minds, and not deplore the injury thus occasioned to the cause of Christianity in our land? To how many souls, may the truth as it is in Jesus, in its saving power and efficacy, have been brought, within these now ruined walls! To how many, may *they* have been, indeed "the gate of heaven!" How many may have passed, from under the happy influence of the offices there administered, to "the paradise of God!" How many within that sacred house, recalled by the message brought from the throne of God to their ears and hearts, may have been turned to the Lord, from all the evil of their nature and the world, and been made glad and obedient followers of the Lord; showing their *faith by their works, and adorning the doctrine of God their Saviour in all things!* How many, even at the very day of the calamity that has befallen, may have been in the progress of an effectual conversion from sin, to God and holiness, and happily there, acquiring a knowledge of "the way, the truth, and the life!" How many, should this melancholy interruption of the offices of this hitherto so favoured house of God, be of long continuance, how many may be turned away from the path of life, and be lost to the moral interest of their being, both in time and forever!" \*

"For our country's sake, let me say to you also, we are called to do this good, such as the text describes, "to the house of God and the offices thereof." The influence of Christian institutions of worship and instruction, upon the moral state of society, and of course upon the character and conduct of men as citizens and rulers, none will hesitate to own. And if, in general, this must be admitted, with what additional force must it be felt, in reference to an institution of the character of that whose affliction we are lamenting; an institution indispensably demanding for the conduct of its interests and business, a well instructed, influential ministry, and holding under the effect of its offices, so many of all orders and conditions of men, from the highest to the lowest in the community! Imagine and admit the permanent deduction, from the moral causes which affect, in a greater or less degree, the character of our people, of this Church, and of the solemn and impressive ministrations of which, it has been, so long the scene; and say whether the best

interests of society, were not thus deeply to be injured. I do not believe that there is an individual of the community, in whose bosom, there is a susceptibility of an interest in its moral and temporal welfare, in their inseparable combination, who would not deprecate the loss to it, thus supposed to be unavoidable. With what high satisfaction then, will all hail, in the general disposition that is manifesting itself to countenance and support this portion of our communion, in their effort to be reinstated, as a Christian congregation, the evidence, that this evil now painfully recognized, shall be but of a very limited temporary duration!

"I will only add to the reasons so given, why this help of all should be extended to the need of our suffering elder sister Church, that for the sake of *the memory of the pious and the good*, who were instrumental of the rearing of the magnificent temple of God, now destroyed, it should be done. They caused this monument of their faith and devotion, to be erected, under circumstances, which gave comparatively few to divide the solicitude and labour it required. Their work, so nobly done, has adorned our city, and been the pride and distinction of our Church. Shall we be insensible to the claim their memory puts in upon us, to repair and replace it? Can we look upon their tombs in which their ashes lie, amidst the smouldering ruins of that work of their hands, in which for the honour of God, and the good of those who were to follow them in their generation, they took so great delight, and not feel *intensely* the reproach of our own hearts, in the bare thought of withholding our hand from the share of this pious enterprize, which may properly be ours? It would bespeak a decline in the character of our community, at the bare thought of which, the heart sickens into torpor, that this edifice should not rise upon the foundations of it which remain, to be for their future, as it has been for their past history, the ornament and blessing of our Church and city. Let it utterly be forbidden!"

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FOR THE GOSPEL MESSENGER.

THE CAUSE OF DAVID'S EXTREME SORROW, ON THE OCCASION  
OF ABSALOM'S DEATH, CONSIDERED.

The eye has seldom witnessed, and the pen would fail in the attempt to describe such emotions as those of David, on the occasion of Absalom's death. And the language "O my son Absalom, my son, my son Absalom, would God I had died for thee," was not the sudden burst of feeling at the intelligence of his death, for it was uttered after some interval, a second time, and his grief lasted so as to attract the attention of the whole nation. The heart involuntarily acknowledges David to be an unaffected sufferer; and the pious man naturally associates

the scene before us with the yet more gloomy one of Calvary. He sees the *son of David*, suspended, bleeding, on the cross. He hears the agonized cry, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me." And if in sympathy with the *king of Israel*, he has shed many tears; over the sorrows of the Lord of life, the victim of its guilt, he may be said to go mourning all the day long. The anguish excited by the death of Absalom, if not in the history of human nature, certainly in the history of David is unparalleled, and considering some circumstances of the case, appears not a little remarkable. It seems, at first sight, inconsistent with the character of David; with the conduct he had exhibited on similar occasions, and with the character of Absalom. To David God had borne this most honourable testimony; he is "a man after mine own heart, who shall fulfill *all my will*." It was to have been expected that such a person would have been remarkable for his submission to the divine will. Adorning by his virtues the true religion, it was to be hoped that he would add to them that brightest gem, a meek and quiet spirit; that in the valley of affliction, the light of true goodness burning with new lustre, would have attracted a more than ordinary attention, and have animated his fellow men in the pursuit of that rare and difficult virtue, acquiescence in the dispensations of heaven. Had the guardian of his infancy, the counsellor of his youth, the child of his affections, the wife of his bosom, or the friend of his whole life, been torn from his embraces by unrelenting death, we might even then have demanded of this pious veteran, the temper and the ejaculation of Job, "The Lord hath given, and the Lord hath taken away, blessed be the name of the Lord." How reasonably then, might we look for resignation, under the death of a child, who day after day marred the peace of his father, and had forfeited all claim to his regard.

Had this been the *first* severe affliction of David, his conduct under it, would have been less surprising. In the best men the voice of piety is too often drowned by the cry of nature. But you will recollect, that the psalmist had now attained the sixty-second year of his age, a period of life at which most mortals have become, if I may so speak, familiar with affliction; that his great calamities occurred prior to this period, and that already, a type of the Saviour, he was in the language of scripture, "a man of sorrow and acquainted with grief." Yet no stranger to sorrow, no novice in the valley of weeping, no youth, with his *unblunted* sensibility, could have exhibited keener emotion. How different was his conduct on other occasions. When Ziklah, a place in which he had found refuge from the persecutions of Saul, was burnt; and he with his whole family, and train of friends, were led away captive by the Amalekites,

and his subjects in their blind rage threatened to stone him; you find him greatly distressed. But his fortitude did not forsake him, and his resignation was equally conspicuous; "David inquired at the Lord, and *encouraged* himself in the Lord his God." When the prophet Nathan denounced against him a succession of afflictions, at the bare mention of which, the ear of every man must tingle, he meekly replied, "I have sinned against the Lord." During the illness of a beloved child, he fasted and wept and prayed for its recovery, but even then uttered no such bitter lamentation, as that over the deceased Absalom. And when the child died, though he knew that his own guilt had produced this divine judgment, with characteristic resignation he observed, "Wherefore should I fast? Can I bring him back again?" He ceased to mourn, and resumed his accustomed avocations. When it was reported to David that Absalom had murdered all his brothers, when he knew assuredly that his son Ammon, was killed, and that his daughter Tamar was, we may almost say, worse than dead, you find he "tore his garments, lay on the earth, and mourned," but beyond this tribute exacted by nature, nothing escapes him, inconsistent with a pious submission. Cursed and slandered and assaulted by Shimei, he was advised to punish him capitally. But in his bosom every spark of revenge had been extinguished, by his pious resignation, and he nobly replied, "What have I to do with you, ye sons of Zeruiah? Let him alone, and let him curse; it may be that the Lord will look on my affliction, and that the Lord will requite me good for his cursing this day." Deserted, and his life threatened by Saul, he thus pathetically laments his situation: "It was not an enemy that reproached me, then I could have borne it; neither was it he that hated me, that did magnify himself against me; then I would have hid myself from him; but it was thou, a man mine equal, my guide, and mine acquaintance. We took sweet counsel together and walked unto the house of God, in company. Yea, mine own familiar friend, in whom I trusted, which did eat of my bread, hath lifted up his heel against me." Still his confidence in the divine mercy, and acquiescence in the divine wisdom shone through the clouds of adversity, and thus he expressed himself: "As for me, I will call upon God; evening and morning, and at noon will I pray and cry aloud, and he shall hear my voice. Cast thy burden upon the Lord, and he shall sustain thee: he shall never suffer the righteous to be moved. Blessed be the Lord God of Israel from everlasting and to everlasting, amen and amen." Even when his own son, this very Absalom, took up arms against him, he exhibited no peculiar grief. He merely participated in the general sorrow, passing over the brook Kidron, and by the ascent of mount Olivet, with his ad-

herents, *they all* went up weeping as they went. Singular alone in his resignation, was David on that occasion, for it was, then that he thus addressed Zadok: "Carry back the ark of God into the city: if I shall find favour in the eyes of the Lord, he will bring me again, and show me both it, and his habitation. But if he thus say, I have no delight in thee; behold here am I let him do to me as seemeth good unto him." It was most probably during this rebellion that he penned those aspirations of an afflicted but resigned spirit: "Oh that I had wings like a dove! For then I would fly away, and be at rest. Why art thou cast down, O my soul? And why art thou disquieted within me? Hope thou in God; for I shall yet praise him, who is the health of my countenance and my God."

From this brief review of David's history, it is very evident that the temper with which he met affliction, was precisely what he declares it to have been: "Surely I have behaved and quieted myself as a child that is weaned of his mother: I was dumb, I opened not my mouth; because thou didst it." If the tried piety of the psalmist, his long and severe experience of affliction, and the resignation which he had so successfully cultivated, were insufficient to moderate his sorrow on the occasion before us; one would have supposed that the character of the deceased would have contributed to that effect. The annals of mankind seldom exhibit such a complication of crimes as met in the person of Absalom. So indignant was his pious father, that he refused even to see him, and this cannot surprise us when we recollect that he was polluted with incest, and his hands dyed with a brother's blood, that he had fomented a dangerous rebellion against his king and country, and was a bitter persecutor of his own father. In such a character David could not have had, we are told, that he had not, any complacency. Over the corpse of an only, and dutiful, and darling child, we should not have been surprised, had we heard him cry out, "O my son, my son, my son! would God I had died for thee," but when we recollect that this burst of feeling was occasioned by the death of Absalom, whose ruinous career, had been providentially checked, who had received the just wages of his iniquity, we are almost tempted to address the pious David in the words of Bildad to Job: "If thy children have sinned against him, and he have cast them away for their transgression; doth God pervert judgment? or doth the Almighty pervert justice?"

I would not attribute too little to natural tenderness of feeling, and especially when it has been fostered by religion. In the bosom of the psalmist this amiable quality existed in its fullest strength. By his order the murderers of his *rival* enemies, instead of being rewarded, were brought to capital punishment. Twice was Saul in his power, and twice was his life magnani-

mously spared, and by no person was the death of Saul more pathetically lamented than by that David, for whose blood he thirsted. I would not attribute too little to parental love. The prodigal was received with open arms and fondly embraced by his father, even before he had made his confession. But the remains of affection in the bosom of David will not satisfactorily explain this excessive grief. At the death of Ammon, a son though unworthy, much dearer to him than Absalom, and of the first child, of his beloved Bathsheba, you find him comparatively moderate in his grief, and resigned to the divine will. You hear no such wish as this, "would God I had died for thee." One supposition alone can account for this deep affliction. Absalom was cut off in the midst of his crimes. He died impenitent, and there was too great reason to fear was now sustaining the accumulated vengeance of his offended Maker. Reject this supposition, and the sorrow of David is utterly irreconcileable with his distinguished piety, the resignation he had exhibited under far severer losses, and the profligate character of Absalom. On the other hand such a reflection as this in the mind of David, would have naturally excited the deepest anguish. The circumstances which at first view render the excessive grief of David surprising, were the very springs of that grief. David was eminent for his *piety*, and therefore capable of estimating the spiritual joys forfeited, and the torments incurred by his unhappy son. He had indeed often drunk of the cup of affliction, but this was the bitterest draught that had ever been presented to his aged lips. Other and worthier children had been snatched from him by death, but of their salvation, he could cherish some hope, for such a consolation alas! the excessive depravity, and the sudden death of Absalom, left little, if any, room. Separation from the objects of his affection, he could bear, but his fortitude shrunk back appalled by the prospect of their eternal misery, and the resignation which had withstood many a storm of adversity, now for the first time began to totter. It was a deep concern for the spiritual welfare of his rebellious son which extorted the agonizing cry above quoted. It was a strong conviction, that his own salvation was secured; and a strong apprehension that Absalom was sustaining the heavy penalty of his crimes, which gave rise to the ardent wish, "my son, my son, would God I had died for thee."

From this subject, it is obvious to remark that the Christian does not dread sudden death. To have some opportunity to arrange one's worldly affairs; to compose the spirits, to withdraw the thoughts and affections from earth, and to fix them on heaven; to bid adieu to friends, to encourage the pious, animate the careless, and warn the impenitent, by the impres-

sive lessons of a death bed scene, is undoubtedly very desirable. But he whose great business is settled, whose peace with God is made, can easily forego these lesser advantages. He knows that the human frame is a delicately constructed machine, which in the twinkling of an eye may suspend its accustomed motions. Day after day, he witnesses his brethren in the bloom of health and in the vigour of manhood, cropped by the scythe of death. In the volume of inspiration, he reads, "In the midst of life we are in death." These things make him serious, but they excite no extraordinary emotion, for he is habitually ready to meet his judge. Let it be the endeavour and prayer of all to be enabled to cherish this habitual readiness. "Blessed is that servant whom his Lord, when he cometh, shall find so doing."

Dreadful indeed is sudden death to the impenitent. Death under any circumstances, must be to them a most unwelcome messenger. On the current of their joys, he brings a perpetual frost. Their appetites and passions are bound by his adamantine chain to their own bosoms, there to rage and torment interminably. He removes them forever from a world in which they have planted *all* their hopes, and introduces them into the presence of an incensed deity, to the society of fiends, and the horrors of a guilty conscience. But when his approaches are slow, there is some hope, that he will blunt the power of evil inclination, remove from the eyes of the sinner, that veil through which guilty pleasure appears alluring, and thus lead to an effectual, though it be a late repentance. To the wicked then, a *protracted* dissolution, is a great mercy, and to their pious friends, is a spring of much consolation. But who can promise himself this opportunity of grace, this last boon of a righteous judge?

Death may come on you unawares, in the hour of health, as well as of sickness, in the hall of amusement or of business, as well as in the chamber of repose. It is your wisdom then instantly to prepare, and constantly to stand ready for his summons. If personal considerations cannot animate you to this reasonable duty. Think of the situation in which your sudden removal, would place your pious friends! You know what were the feelings of the psalmist, when his impenitent son was suddenly called to judgment. Are you yet impenitent? Have you yet to obtain through the blood of the cross, pardon for your sins, spiritual life, and the hope of glory? Lo! your father, your mother, your wife, your brother, your friend, bent by despair over your corpse, and exclaiming, "Would God I had died for thee!" Have you children, or are you a guardian, or sponsor? Oh bring them up in the ways of religion, and do all that is in your power to save them from

misery here and hereafter, and yourselves, (should you survive them,) from such torturing reflections, as those we have been considering. Instruct them at home, bring them constantly to Church, and embrace eagerly such opportunities, as may be afforded you, for having them instructed, warned and incited by the ministers of the Church, and by the catechists, or Sunday School teachers.

They who walk in the steps of Absalom, who are living in rebellion against their father in heaven, have indeed reason to unite fervently in the petition of our litany, "From sudden death, good Lord deliver us." May divine grace bring all prodigals to a deep sense of their situation, incline them to repentance, and while they are yet a great way off, may the father of his abundant mercy, meet them with the arms of forgiveness and reconciliation for the sake of our blessed Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

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FOR THE GOSPEL MESSENGER.

### THE GENERAL INSTITUTIONS OF OUR CHURCH.

(Continued from page 81.)

The claims of these institutions cannot be brought more distinctly before the minds of her members, than by calling their attention to the inquiry, *what is their object?* Under the influence of what considerations, has she been led to their establishment? The answer to this inquiry must satisfy the mind of the Christian, and convince him of his personal obligation to their strenuous support. If the object be good and important, and if the means for its attainment come commended to us as they do, by the collective wisdom of our spiritual counsellors, the path of duty is plain.

The object of the Church then, in the establishment of these general institutions, is none other than the performance of the duty with which she has been charged by her divine head, *the sanctification of her own members, and the conversion of the world.* The Church, is the divinely appointed instrument for the manifestation on earth of the Redeemer's glory, for carrying out its complete accomplishment, the blessed purpose for which the Son of God consented to tabernacle in this world of sin. She is honoured and privileged in being chosen to so high and ennobling a distinction; but the very honour and privilege increase the measure of the obligation to be faithful in the fulfilment of her important trust. The interests of God and of man, are committed to her charge. The means, the heaven-provided means, are placed in her possession, by which God is to be glorified, and man delivered from sin's debasing and enthralling power. The truth as it in Jesus, is intrusted to her keeping,

and she is bound to make that truth operate in its illuminating and purifying influence, upon her own members, and through them, upon a world which lieth in wickedness. That this is her solemn and imperious duty, a duty imposed on her by God himself, and indissolubly connected with the possession of her peculiar privileges, none can question. How shall it be performed? How shall she most effectually apply the means which God has given her for the attainment of her object? The manner of their application, the mode of action, her own wisdom, influenced by God's directing grace must determine. When it is determined, the magnitude of the object, the constraining necessity which urges her to its attainment, must furnish the stimulus, to carry her determination into vigorous operation.

Let us look then, at the magnitude of the object. Let us dwell for a while, upon the momentous results, connected with that lengthening of her cords, and strengthening her stakes, to which the Church is called. Let us begin with herself. She needs to be active in the promotion of the interests of her own members. Even supposing that her present condition, were one of the utmost prosperity, that all her members had attained to the perfection of Christian virtue, as well as of Christian knowledge, that the degree of their sanctification was in just proportion to the measure of their privileges, still would they be exposed to spiritual dangers, and need to be preserved in faith and steadfastness, by the exertions of an enlightened ministry, and the constant and wide diffusion of religious truth. And still would they be bound to keep a watchful and a jealous eye over the interests of their children, and to devise means for the instruction, and sanctification, and salvation of coming generations. The Church of Christ must be engaged in a continual warfare against the powers of evil, who have held the mastery over this ruined world; and every victory which she gains, instead of furnishing an occasion to relax her efforts, only increases the necessity of watchfulness and diligence. The knowledge of the aggravated evils, which would be consequent on relapse and discomfiture, acts as a new incentive to activity and faithfulness. The higher the stand which the Church has already taken, the louder is the call on her to maintain her high position, securely and honourably to herself and to her master. She is a city set on an hill, which cannot be hid; she must either stand there in beauty and strength, the terror of her enemies, the delight of all her friends; or by the manifestation of weakness and decay, furnish occasion of shame to those who love her and provoke her adversaries, to invade and destroy her. A regard for her self-preservation therefore, obliges her to maintain and to elevate her character. She must do this by continuing in the possession of an increasingly enlightened min-

istry, and by providing for the faithful and judicious instruction of her children. On the ground of this consideration, if she had no other, she might rest the claim to the support of her General Theological Seminary, and Sunday School Union. Even on the supposition, that the ground which she has taken already, is as high as it ought to be, these institutions must be sustained and their interests promoted with zeal and vigour, or she must inevitably go backward. The ranks of those who now exercise the ministry within her borders must be thinned by death, and diminished by age. How shall their places be supplied? What shall be the character of those who shall supply them? The world is improving continually in knowledge and intelligence; shall the progress of the Church be retrograde? May she be even stationary? Not without shame and injury surely. And how shall she go forward? She must furnish the champions to maintain her cause. She must arm them for the contest; not by praying merely, that God may invest them with the shield of faith, and the helmet of salvation, (though that is her unquestionable duty, and she may in no wise shrink from it,) but by furnishing them also with their great offensive weapon, the sword of the spirit, which is the word of God, and instructing them to use it with energy and skill. By the establishment of her school of the prophets, she has declared this to be her wise and holy resolution; by extending to it their constant and liberal support, her members must prove that the resolution is a sincere and hearty one. The generation of those who now worship at her altars, will soon have passed away; does she expect their children to occupy their places, and to occupy them worthily? How can she—what right has she to expect it, unless she puts forth all her energies to lead those children in the days of their youth into the way of holiness, to store their minds with the truths, and to affect their hearts with the motives of the gospel? This in her Sunday School Union she has prepared to do. But is it enough to prepare for it? Is it enough to provide the means, without attending to their use and application? Surely not. The institution must not only be established; it must be made to operate. Its operation must be watched with the most anxious attention, and directed by the soundest wisdom, and stimulated by the most untiring zeal. She must not be satisfied with possessing it; but by the very fact of its possession, be excited to invest it with all the efficiency of which it is susceptible. She must know what it is doing—examine whether it is doing well—inquire why it may not do more. She owes it to herself, to her master, to the immortal souls whom the Providence of God, has committed to her nurturing care.

But how much additional strength may not this argument derive from even a cursory view of the actual condition of the Church? She would need to do all this, even if she were already all that we could wish her: but the case is far otherwise. Her breaches are many—her desolations are great—even her fairest portions, are far from the beauty which they might attain. Her ministers are few—her members are scattered abroad too often as sheep without a shepherd; multitudes of her children are training up in ignorance and forgetfulness of God, and threatening that her altars, forsaken already by too many, shall be rendered still more desolate. Oh! if there were no other souls on the whole earth than those who are already reckoned among the possessors of the Christian name; if the Church had no other charge committed to her, than the sanctification and salvation of those who are already regarded as her children, this were enough and more than enough, to call into continual exercise her best exertions. She would have need to multiply the labourers in her harvest, and fit them to become labourers indeed. She would have need to bring her children to Jesus, and to instruct her youth in the doctrine of their Saviour. She would have need to seek out of this wilderness her wandering sheep, and to restore them to the fold from whence they have departed. And can she refuse to do it when she knows, that even this is only the first step of still greater duties; when she remembers that the *world* is spread before her in all its length and breadth as the field which she must cultivate, and that every hour in which she delays to labour to the utmost in the spiritual behalf of her own members, only adds new hindrances to the work which is given her to do, and on the doing of which depend the eternal interests of perishing millions? Each individual who refuses, or in a spirit of apathy, withdraws his warm co-operation, tacitly determines that she shall not do it. How fearful is the responsibility connected with such a resolution!

(*To be continued.*)

FOR THE GOSPEL MESSENGER.

#### COMMENCEMENT OF THE MEDICAL COLLEGE.

*Messrs. Editors.*—It was as gratifying to many as it must have been useful to those addressed, that the President of the Medical College of the State of South-Carolina, distinctly and impressively remarked, both at the late and at the preceding commencement, that the *foundation* of a character, that would command general and lasting regard and respect, must be laid not in scientific attainment, and the developement of talent, nor in the principles of honour, falsely so called, but in the pure morality and piety of the Christian religion. He also remark-

ed, that Christian principles are the best foundation of *national* honour and prosperity, and reminded us what Greece and Rome might have been, had Christianity been an element in their character. It was judicious to tell those students (whose minds had been so much occupied with the physical and intellectual nature,) and as a final and farewell lesson, that religion must be the basis of all excellence, usefulness, and distinction, that without this "one thing," they could be neither beloved, respected or happy. The valuable and seasonable lesson was imparted with appropriate dignity and feeling. In the course of the address, there was a remark which we trust will not be without its effect on the multitude of both sexes, young and mature, who were present. If, said the speaker, (we do not undertake to give the very words,) the same time, solicitude, and energy, were bestowed on the acquisition of knowledge, and moral excellence, as are bestowed on the acquiring and securing of wealth, and the mind absorbed by those pursuits, rather than by this, inestimable would be the results to the individual and the community. The hint was properly given to intellectual and scientific men, for it is a melancholy fact, that too many even of *such* men, reduce themselves to the level of those who have no public spirit, no charity, no taste for any thing but sordid pursuits. Seneca, we are told, was the slave of avarice, and the tendencies of our age and country are certainly rather in the direction of *that* passion, than of the "infirmity of noble minds," or of the love of gaiety. In our social circles, what is the most usual and most exciting topic? Is it not the opportunity of pecuniary aggrandizement, presented by the rising commerce of our city, or the prairies of the West?

A heathen poet has said of avarice, "This is the cause of most sins; nor is there any vice, of which the mind of man is capable that hath been guilty of more murders and poisonings, than a furious desire of immoderate wealth, for he that will be rich, will make haste to be so, and what reverence of laws, what fear or shame was ever seen in any man that was in haste to be rich." A modern infidel philosopher has given his testimony to the same effect; "the thirst of gain is the parent of all crimes." The infallible scriptures declare, "the love of money is the root of all evil." We do hope that this lesson will be often repeated to the rising generation; and that their efforts will be directed zealously and perseveringly to the attainment of knowledge and virtue, and their minds and hearts interested and occupied with something better than those riches which are unsatisfactory, precarious, and at best but for a moment.

A GRATIFIED SPECTATOR AND HEARER.

FOR THE GOSPEL MESSENGER.

## AN INCIDENT.

A meeting of the male members of St. Philip's Church, was held in the Sunday School House. A deeply interesting subject engaged their attention. A gentleman was speaking. A shout was heard. The assembly rushed to the door and the windows. The great northern wall, about thirty-five feet high, and sixty feet long, (power being applied to it,) fell like a mighty giant. The noise was as thunder; the air was filled with dust, thick as smoke. *Sic transit gloria mundi.*

FOR THE GOSPEL MESSENGER.

## A CURIOUS CIRCUMSTANCE.

On taking down the walls of St. Philip's Church, there was discovered in the North-east corner traces of a small chimney. Tradition reports that an aged member, in times long gone by, who was afflicted with the gout, was permitted to make (out of the sight of the congregation,) that convenience, without which he could not have participated in the public devotions. Surely that man loved the habitation of the Lord, and valued the privilege of the "communion of the saints."

## REVIEW DEPARTMENT.

## BISHOP IVES' PASTORAL LETTER.

*A Pastoral Letter addressed to the Diocese of North-Carolina, February 18, 1835. By the Right Rev. Levi Silliman Ives, D. D. Bishop of the Diocese.*—As it is a duty to contribute of our property to the cause of religion and humanity, so the thing is to be done, not from mere sympathy, but on principle; not from impulse, but after deliberation; not now and then but habitually. Common sense teaches that a duty is to be understandingly, regularly, and constantly performed, that money is often worse than wasted when bestowed without discrimination, and that the effect of *stated* appropriations although small at each time, (in preference to occasional contributions although they might be sometimes large,) would be not only to increase the amount in the treasury of charity, but to check disproportionate and misapplied gifts. The holy scriptures favour these views, by the example of the Jews who gave a tenth of their income, or as some think one seventh, to the kindred purposes of religion and benevolence; and indeed in an earlier age, (the patriarchal,) by the example of Abraham who gave to the service of God the tithe of his spoils, and by that of Jacob vowed that of all the Lord should give him, he would surely return the tenth, and by the *precept*: "Upon the first day of the week let every one of you lay by him in store, as God hath prospered him," for the collection for the saints.

In the letter before us the Bishop recommends a *systematic charity*, by various considerations: the inefficiency of irregular charity—the obligation of constantly doing good—the suggestions of divine wisdom on the subject, and the success which has attended the proposed plan, in a diocese of our own country. But we will not detain our readers from the impressive remarks, and unanswerable reasoning in this letter:

*Inconveniences of the existing plan*: “The very existence and frequency and necessity of so much importunate solicitation, furnishes to my mind, a startling evidence of some great deficiency in the proper spirit and habit of doing good.” \* \* \* “Notwithstanding our present efforts are so disproportioned to the wants of the destitute and to our actual ability, still observe, with what apparent difficulty these appearances are kept up! Agencies, charity sermons, newspaper appeals, with numberless other expedients, are resorted to, to keep alive this feeble interest, and to draw forth this reluctant bounty in behalf of the needy. This state of things is not so much owing to a positive indisposition to give, as it is to *bad habits* in giving. The Christian community, through improper training, has become callous to ordinary motives; seems to have lost the power, as it were, to do good, except on an extended scale, and at some earnest and extraordinary call. The consequence is, the bulk of Christians really suppose, they have no permanent, every day concern, in the works of charity.” \* \* \* “The plan hitherto pursued, of making occasional collections or subscriptions, invariably throws the burdens of charity, if burdens they may be called, upon a few individuals. Many who might contribute their mite, are by this means, induced, from a foolish pride, to give *nothing*, because they cannot give *much*.”

*Advantages of the proposed plan*: “To be engaged habitually for the good of others, affords the best security to the advancement of our personal welfare. Had we nothing to strive for, but an earthly inheritance, this would be true. The needful good things of time are, by divine promise, *to be added to him* ‘who seeks first,’ or *supremely*, ‘the kingdom of heaven. Neither is this promise a mere matter of revelation; thousands have experienced its truth. It is verified almost daily before our eyes. Who has not remarked that the truly benevolent man, is blessed in his basket, and in his store, *That the liberal soul is, in truth, made fat.*’” \* \* \* “This will help too, to settle many a perplexing query about worldly amusements. It will often save the Christian the trouble of examination into the lawfulness or unlawfulness of an indulgence, by engaging his sympathies so strongly for the unfortunate, as to make him feel that *he* has neither time nor substance to squander, while so much spiritual suffering is still unrelieved.” \* \* \* “Suppose the practise were to become general in our Episcopal families, of laying aside something *weekly*, no matter how small the amount, as an ‘offering’ to the Church; and where is there an individual, so poor or so young, as not to be disposed to devote a little to Christ, in return for his infinite love? And this mode would have the double advantage of helping the needy, and blessing ourselves. The comparatively poor, while saving a penny for the still more necessitous, would learn a lesson of contentment. The

children of prosperous parents would be taught to know and feel, that there are children born to adversity—in want of the means of comfort, of instruction and of salvation; and in this way their young hearts would soon learn to sympathize with the unfortunate, and become anxious to sacrifice some of the little, needless luxuries of life, to relieve them. And what could be more gratifying to a Christian parent, than to see the earliest thoughts of his infant offspring engrossed in laying up something for the benefit of the needy! And what more encouraging evidence could we have, of the improving state of our corrupt world, than to observe a general inclination and diligence among all degrees of men in the Church, to diffuse the blessings of Christ's kingdom! Adopt then dear brethren, the counsel of St. Paul, and let every one of you lay by him in store, on the first day of the week as God hath prospered him; and your eyes shall be blessed with beholding the happy fruits of benevolence in your families and neighbourhoods, and the prosperous state of the Church in our diocese.

"In the second place, to act effectually we must act *in concert*. Those small and scattered efforts, which put forth singly would be entirely lost, when brought together, present a moral force hardly to be resisted. My brethren, those pennies, which because they are pennies, you either do not give, or sending them out alone, you give to little purpose, if collected and cast as an offering *into the treasury of the Lord*, would enable us to carry into full effect those schemes of good, so near our hearts, and so identified with the prosperity of our Church. Let us test the soundness of this remark by actual estimate. At our last convention, the number of communicants reported was 1080. Add to this, for children old enough to give, and for adults who have not communed 1500, which is below the fact, and we have 2580. Now of this number, 500 at least would experience no burden, in appropriating to charitable uses *two cents a day*—making an annual amount of \$3,650. Another 500 might give *one cent a day*—making \$1,825 more. The remainder might give at least *one cent a week*—making the further sum of \$821 60—producing an aggregate of \$6,296 60. Small as may be our resources, this amount I am clearly convinced, might be more easily raised, on the plan I propose, than the reduced sum of \$1,500, which is usually contributed; besides making us a much happier, holier, and more prosperous people."

*Success of the proposal:* "My excellent brother, the Bishop of New-Jersey, who comes behind in no gift, has carried the principle here enforced, fully into practice, and experienced from its operation, for the last two years, the most desirable results."

*Concluding remark:* "Should we (the plan being carried out) be spared by a merciful Providence to meet again in convention, we shall rejoice together in view of our well-sustained missionary operations, the cheering promise of our Episcopal school, our enlarged ability to aid the general institutions of the Church, and of an increase among us of personal interest in the blessings of the covenant of redemption."

#### THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY OF KENTUCKY.

*Charter, Regulations, Course of Study, &c., of the Theological Seminary of the Protestant Episcopal Church in the State of Ken-*

tucky.—The diocese of Kentucky, (as they had a right) have looked into the questions: whether a Theological Seminary for their own diocese, is *practicable*, and whether having one is preferable to an union with the other dioceses in sustaining our General Theological Seminary, and have decided both in the affirmative. We in South-Carolina though quite as able to endow a seminary of our own, as any one of the dioceses which has chosen to have its own, have been of a different opinion, and time will show which course was the best, for sustaining the integrity, and advancing the prosperity of the Church in these United States, considered as one. That certain advantages result to a diocese from having its own seminary, cannot be doubted, but whether these are not at the expense of the Church considered as a whole, and whether the advantages of the personal convenience of candidates, and the multiplication of clergymen are not counterbalanced by the dangers of a multiform theology, and of schools that may become rivals are serious questions, upon which we have no disposition to enter at present. These views were set forth in the beginning, when as yet our Church had no Theological Seminary, but it is evident in vain. May a kind Providence overrule the result for good!

On another question, whether it is best for each diocese to have its own seminary, or to send its students to some other *diocesan* seminary we have no hesitation in preferring the first alternative. The 10th Canon refers to candidates for orders, as being under the superintendence of their own Bishop. They are so *sent* to the General Seminary, for of *that*, each Bishop is a trustee. But how can a Bishop be said to have any the least control over a candidate who is sent to a diocesan seminary, which is of course regulated by the diocese which founded and sustains it?

The seventh section of the same Canon, enacts that the candidate shall remain such *for three years*, exceptions being of course admitted. But we find among the regulations of this Kentucky Seminary, the following: "There shall be three classes in the Seminary, the term of study in each of which shall be one year. The classes shall be known and distinguished as the Graduating, Senior and Junior classes. The Graduating class in Deacon's Orders, shall reside with or near the Rector of some parish, under whose care they shall pursue the subject of Pastoral Theology, *practically*." According to these regulations, not some but all candidates at the end of *two years*, may be admitted to Deacon's Orders, and thus the term, as a general rule, is *reduced* contrary to the provision of the seventh section referred to above. This must have been an oversight and should be corrected. That all our apprehensions as to diocesan seminaries weakening the unity of our Church, disturbing its harmony, and encouraging diversity of opinions, and of theological language (a fruitful source of contention,) may prove merely imaginary, and that the seminary before us may in its soundness and usefulness, exceed the most sanguine wishes of its founders and friends (to one of whom the whole Church is largely indebted for no common zeal, ability and services enlisted in her cause,) is our sincere and fervent wish.

**SELECTIONS.**

FOR THE GOSPEL MESSANGER.

**Messrs. Editors.**—The Sunday School like all other good things may be misused and perverted. Its liabilities to interfere with what may be called the “Parental school,” and the “Clergyman’s school,” that is, with domestic and ministerial religious instruction, are the dangers which ought especially to be watched, and guarded against. The Sunday School is of *human*, and the other schools named above are of *divine* institution. I intended to have written an essay on this matter, when I met with the following articles which will answer for the present.

**CATECHISING.**

“Of the good old ways of the Church, no one is of more real utility than that of a faithful discharge of the duty of catechising the young. By this term I do not mean simply the *hearing* of stated lessons of the Prayer-book. Though every word of that most admirable compendium should be carefully committed to memory—nor yet do I mean that careful attention should be given to those many excellent helps and enlargements of the Church catechism, found in our Sunday School books, and other convenient publications—but my remarks extend to that peculiar duty of the ministry—of every clergyman having charge of a parish, not only to hear, but fully—repeatedly familiarly—constantly to explain the whole to the children of his flock. ‘Feed my lambs,’ said the divine head of the Church to his apostle. There is no exercise of the sacred office more interesting—none more useful. The neglect of it is seen and felt all over our land, in the lamentable ignorance of myriads of adults in the plainest principles of the Christian faith, in the strange vagaries of conceited fanaticism—the selfishness of worldly-mindedness—the laxness of public and private morals.

“Among the solid and interesting matters contained in the address of the Bishop of New-York, to the last diocesan convention, his remarks on this subject, were to my mind full of importance, for I had long looked upon the danger we were in, from the fact that our Sunday School operations have to no small degree diverted from the proper source, that stream of *pastoral*—yes, *pastoral* communication on which, under the divine blessing, so much depends. Faithful Sunday School teachers are highly valuable aids in the business of instruction, but let it be kept in mind: ‘*The priests lips are to keep knowledge, and the people are to seek the law at his mouth.*’ The exposition of the Word is his work, not that of a Sunday School teacher. They have a wide field before them in helping the young to get their lessons—in finding their places of abode—leading them to this nursery of the Church, and showing them examples of order, diligence, decorum, and piety, and especially in the observance of the Lord’s-day.

“Though the Bishop’s address appeared entire in the Messenger, it is thought by the present writer that the repetition of the part of it referred to in these remarks will not be improper. The Bishop says:

The beneficial effects of Sunday Schools on society, and on the Church, are too obvious, and now too generally admitted, to require assertion. They have led the way to the building up of churches. They have supplied some of the most valuable accessions to the ranks of those who are preparing for the holy ministry. By leading to the due use of the established means of grace, they have in their pupils and their teachers, and in the families of both furnished some of the brightest examples of Christian piety in life, and of Christian triumph in death. To all my brethren, therefore, both clergy and laity, I would say, most earnestly and affectionately, befriend, patronize, serve, the Sunday School, strengthen and promote the cause of Sunday School instruction, and extend as you may its influence—the clergy in their proper province as the pastors of the Church, the laity in due subordination to those who are the divinely appointed guardians and feeders of the flock of Christ, and all in the true spirit of the gospel, in deference to the good order and wholesome discipline of the Church, and an unwavering consistency with their character as members of the primitive and apostolical communion.

Such, however, is the present imperfection of man, in every individual and social department, that nothing good is without exposure to attendant evil. Two dangers of this kind present themselves to my mind as requiring notice in reference to Sunday School instruction.

"It were a sad abuse of so holy and blessed a charity, if, because of its requiring the services of lay aids to the pastor in imparting religious instruction, it should excite in any a spirit of insubordination, or infringement on the proper prerogatives of the pastoral office. The principle should never be forgotten, that Sunday scholars are catechumens belonging to the pastor, and Sunday teachers, catechists acting by permission, and under the authority of the pastor. Every pastor, therefore, should be held as supreme in the Sunday Schools of his parish. Gladly, indeed, and gratefully, should he avail himself of the kind Christian offices of those who are disposed to be his aids in this great work, and all the arrangements should, as much as may be, be made with a reference to their feelings and views, and a respect to the results of their experience and mutual counsels. But responsibility should be his undividedly; and nothing, therefore, be done without his direction, or his consent and approbation. No independent action, and especially no influence, in either their individual or collective capacity, beyond the simple business of their office as the pastor's aids in the care of the Sunday School, should be thought of by the Sunday teacher. Sore evils, in the violation of Christian order, to the discredit of the Christian character, and to the disturbance of peace and harmony in the Church, have been felt as the consequence of other principles. Against these the truly Christian minded Sunday School teacher will most solicitously guard.

"Another subject connected with our Sunday Schools, on which I regard them as dictating a word of caution to my reverend brethren; is suggested by the bearing which these schools may have on the important pastoral duty of *catechising*. I am not without my fears, that the kind offices of Sunday School teachers are sometimes suffered to operate as a dispensation from that attention to this duty which the Church evidently designs to inculcate upon her pastors, and which has

ever been regarded as among her best means of the spiritual care of her members. She requires that her ministers *examine* all the children of their cures in the *Church catechism*, and *instruct* them therein. The first requisition makes it the pastor's duty to attend in person, to see that the children *know* the catechism; and the second supposes his diligently engaging in a system of *instruction* which will enable them properly to *understand* it. As aiding in this instruction, the use of *explanatory catechisms* has long had the sanction and approval of the Church, both in England and in this country. And I have no hesitation in recommending for this purpose, to my reverend brethren of this diocese, catechisms numbers 2 and 3, as published by the General Sunday School Union of our Church.

"It is farther required, that the catechetical examination and instruction be done '*diligently*,' and '*openly in the Church*.' This evidently enforces upon the clergy the duty of examining and instructing the children in the catechism with such frequency as will justify its being regarded as '*diligently*' done '*in the Church*,' and '*openly*,' so that all who will may be present, to witness the exercise and profit by it.

"If in consideration of the labours of Sunday School teachers, the pastor should be remiss in his required *pastoral* attention to this duty, if other modes of religious training should be suffered to supersede diligent and thorough instruction in the *Church catechism*, or if the use of other places, and the greater privacy of school exercises, should prevent due attention to catechising, and instructing in the catechism, *openly in the Church*, there would be an unnatural and injurious interference of a system of great excellence in itself, and in its proper sphere, with the good order and wholesome provisions of the Church."

"Let every parish minister pause and pray over this subject, and let all his people encourage his heart, and hold his hands.—WAKE.—Auburn *Gos. Mess.*



#### THE FAMILY INSTITUTION,

"I am to show by what agency the bible, in all its preventive, healing and saving power, can be brought to bear on little children. Here the first thing that presents itself, is the domestic circle. The family institution is the true *primary school*: and it is one of God's own appointment. In all my meditations and efforts on the subject of Christian education, I turn to the family circle. This is the first school to which children are sent, a school devised by infinite wisdom, and as an educational institution, adapted above all others to the nature of the beings to be educated, and to accomplish the great and holy purposes of all proper education; that is, the holiness and happiness of immortal souls. What is the great design of the family institution?

"I look on this world as one great seminary, where immortal souls are to be trained for higher and nobler scenes. God creates these souls, sends them into this world, and as they pass through it, they form a character, which is to decide their eternal destiny. God would have them form such a character as shall fit them to dwell with him for ever. To secure this holy object, he formed an institution, by whose agency his benevolent design might be carried into effect. At its first entrance into life, God places the infant in the family circle. He ap-

points two to superintend its physical, intellectual, and moral education, and unites these two to the helpless being, whom it is their highest honour and privilege to train up for God, by ties which nothing but death can sever. God does not permit any conduct on the part of the child to alienate the hearts of its parents; uniting their hearts to their little pupil, by a love that never tires; *that is long suffering, forgiving, that hopeth all things, endureth all things*; thus fitting them in a peculiar manner, steadily to persevere in the holy work of educating souls for heaven. This is the great design of the family institution—to train the souls which God should make, for his own eternal kingdom. This point should be kept in view in all our efforts to bring the gospel to bear on this world. The family, the dear home of all earthly joys, was not designed merely to provide for the bodily wants of children, and to educate their physical powers, but also to educate their souls for an eternal state. It is, in the fullest sense, an institution for education—for an education adapted to all the wants of the being to be educated. Children have souls and bodies—and in the family both can be cared for. They are connected with two worlds, and here can be trained for both. There is no institution—there can be none, so fitted to accomplish the holy purpose of all education as this. The child is committed to those to whom all sacrifices for its good become a pleasure, and who receive a reward in their own hearts, tenfold, for every effort made to promote the welfare of their beloved pupil. When we consider the nature of the family institution, its peculiar fitness to gain a moral ascendancy and to exercise a moral influence over children; where perfect dependance on one side combines with perfect love and sympathy on the other, to give almost the power of Omnipotence to the precepts and examples of the teachers; when we see the sweet tenderness and joy with which every little pupil is welcomed into this school, and the readiness of all to engage in the pleasing task of instructing it; and when we see the text book which God has furnished to these primary schools and teachers, and its adaptation to the capacities and wants of those who are to be educated, we cannot but feel that God has done all he could do, to secure the holiness and eternal happiness of all his rational creatures. We cannot conceive of an institution and a text book, better adapted to educate this world for heaven.

"What is the fact in regard to the influence of this institution on our individual and social character and destiny? It is admitted that the foundation of our character and destiny is generally laid before we are ten years old. Our character, as we grow up, is not so much the result of our own investigations, as of the training which we received in childhood. Our principles, our ideas of right and wrong, our sense of obligation to God, our fixed habits of feeling, thinking, speaking, and acting, all which goes to constitute our character, and which must necessarily bear on our immortal destiny, is not so much the result of our own reasoning and reflections, as of the associations and sympathies of early childhood. I can hardly think on this subject, without being overwhelmed with a sense of the pitiful condition of those poor chil'dry, for whose moral and religious welfare their natural guardians and teachers feel no concern. How many children have been brought to ruin, to prison, to the gallows, and to a miserable

eternity, through the cruel neglect of those to whom God committed the care of their infancy ! There is no period of life which bears so directly and powerfully on our character, and so much controls our destiny during the whole of our existence, as the ten first years of life; and yet hardly any period is so little thought of. The associations formed during that period are never completely destroyed.

Said a man of fifty years, and of great attainments in piety and learning, ‘The tales of my nursery were of ghosts and witches, and the frightful images of superstition, had full possession of my imagination. As I grew up, my own investigations convinced me that the beings which haunted my childish thoughts and held such entire dominion over my heart, were creatures of imagination, having no real existence. But to this day those early associations and sympathies, in spite of my firm convictions, have great influence over my life and detract much from my happiness.’ Should not we learn a lesson from this ? We should learn the power of early impressions, and that no reasonings after we come to years of maturity can ever save us from the influences which bear on our hearts in childhood. These early impressions and associations form the basis of our character and happiness.

“But where do children spend the first ten years of life ? In the family circle principally—in a primary school of God’s appointing, under tutors whom God placed over them. Here the infant heart is moulded ; here the sympathies and affections are called forth, and the associations formed of right and wrong—all those tender ties which bind the little pupil to man and to God, to time and eternity. Far away from the gaze of the world, and under the eyes of those only whom God appoints to the office, the tender plant is growing up, soon to be transplanted to the paradise of God, or to be cast out and trodden under foot. There are indeed other institutions for the education of children ; but they are of human origin ; good, certainly, in their place, but not like that which God appointed ; nor can they ever take the place of that. All other institutions together do not have so much influence on our character and destiny, as individuals and as a society, as the family institution. This is emphatically our home—the source of existence—the birth-place of our character, and of our eternal destiny.

“The importance of this institution will never be fully realized, till we come to see its bearing on the destiny of souls in eternity. We can appreciate its importance in relation to our earthly being and welfare. We know it is the fountain of our earthly bliss, the centre of our joys, the sweet home of our affections. We know it is the source of our social security and of our national prosperity. Annihilate the family institution, and society would become extinct ; we should inevitably fall back into the state of savage beasts ; religion government and all the blessings of civilization would pass away. Every institution of man’s device, which interferes with the *family* circle and tends to weaken its moral power, must necessarily become a source of evil to men. But when we look at this institution in all its relations to man’s eternal destiny, we are constrained to feel that its importance can never be fully appreciated. To educate children for time and eternity—what object can be more glorious ? What undertaking so responsible ?

What requires more study, more prayer, more faith in God? To this high and holy work all those are called, who are placed at the head of families. The great inquiry is—how all the power of this institution of God can be turned to good account for Christ? How can the whole force of this institution be made to bear on the spiritual interests of our children, to train them all up for heaven? This question concerns every minister and every Christian—especially every Christian parent. How can our families be made nurseries of souls for heaven?—*Boston Recorder.*

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## POETRY.

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### FOR THE GOSPEL MESSENGER.

#### LINES

**On St. Philip's Church, destroyed by Fire, February 15, 1835.**

Our father's temple—often have they bowed  
Within these hallowed walls in fervent prayer,  
Devotion's fire within their bosoms glowed,  
And songs of praise from them ascended there.

Here we too knelt—from childhood's earliest hour,  
Our footsteps trod along the lengthened aisle,  
Gazing on thee—we feel fond Memory's power  
Of hours—of Sabbaths—in thy Gothic pile.

Father—dost thou remember, when thy sire  
Brought thee a bright-haired and a laughing boy  
The preacher's holy precepts to inspire,  
And viewed thee with a parent's pride and joy.

Thou hast thought of these times fondly—often thou  
Gazing upon thy children, hoped that they  
Might point the spot to others—and tell how  
Here first their infant lips were taught to pray.

Maiden—thou hast no memory of the day  
When first a fond and tender mother brought  
Thee to God's altar—and for thee did pray,  
And on thy head a Saviour's blessing sought.

This hallowed pile—so late our city's boast,  
Proudly it met the admiring gazer's view;  
Now we but trace the splendour—beauty lost;  
And see—and feel—the desolation true.

Within these walls has Music's voice been heard,  
And feeling's woke beneath that organ's spell,  
That organ's sound hath ceased—and hymns that rose  
Are silent—in the heart they still shall dwell.

Here we have gazed on monuments—and seen  
Upon their marble many a cherished name.  
For virtue worth recorded—some have been  
Names speaking to us of our country's fame.

These tender recollections—what remain  
 Nought but these ruined walls to mark them ours ?  
 Loosened, not severed, is the sacred chain  
 Still hold—still linked by strong affection's powers.

Our holy temple's fallen—'twas not Time  
 Whose desolating touch this ruin wrought ;  
 Didst thou not start to hear that midnight chime,  
 Telling 'twas flame the sad destruction brought ?

Here where our father's worshipped—here we weep—  
 And sadly think of days—of years gone by ;  
 Yet though at once this sorrow may not sleep—  
 There is a comfort every tear to dry.

Earth's glory may decay—her splendour fall,  
 And prized and beauteous things from us be riven.  
 Remember who hath promised, who will call,  
 To his eternal place of rest in Heaven.

H.

—  
FOR THE GOSPEL MESSENGER.

## LINES

Suggested by St. Philip's Congregation being in a Temporary place of Worship.

Though far from that dear place, O ! King.  
 Where once we worshipp'd thee,  
 Still shall our hearts their offerings bring,  
 Of Faith, and Love, and Charity.

What tho' the organ's solemn sound  
 No more unites with us in praise,  
 Thy gracious love may here abound,  
 Where Pow'r nor Pride their trophies raise.

What though no monuments arise,  
 To tell of the forgotten dead,  
 Here may our prayers, our tears, our sighs,  
 Their grateful influence equal shed.

The solemn arch, the storied urn,  
 No more our anxious eyes may meet,  
 Yet here, O ! Lord, our hearts may burn  
 With love, and feel a joy as sweet.

'Tis not the gorgeous temple, Lord,  
 That makes the worship true,  
 But in the humble heart ador'd,  
 Is found thy reverence due.

Where'er thy Providence, O ! God,  
 Our wand'ring path may lead,  
 Still will we lean on thee beloved,  
 And on thy promise feed.

Nor cares, nor ills, nor loss, nor grief,  
 Which here below our lot may tend,  
 Shall mar our hopes of sweet relief,  
 Or make us less on thee depend.

**RELIGIOUS INTELLIGENCE.**

*Missionary Lecture.*—The fourteenth was delivered at the appointed place and on the regular day, but the weather being very inclement, was repeated on the Thursday next ensuing, (March 12.) The amount collected was \$24.

*St. Philip's Church.—Extract of a letter from Florida.*—“I know not that we were ever more shocked than by the melancholy news conveyed to us by mail last night.” \* \* \* “After reading the account of the conflagration again and again, I still feel as if I could not realize the fact of so venerable a pile, associated with our dearest and earliest recollections, being a victim to the flames. As it has however, fallen, it must rise again from its ashes. It is impossible that its congregation, or the liberal and chivalric citizens of Carolina should not rebuild its walls, and resuscitate the sanctuary in all its former grandeur. Charleston will be no longer Charleston without her St. Philip's Church. Ere this I trust the most active measures have been adopted to restore the fabric. If money is not to be obtained in Carolina, we must seek assistance from abroad. Our northern friends who have so frequently appealed to Carolina liberality, should now be offered the opportunity of returning many of the favours they have received at our hands, until St. Philip's shall again rear its venerable dome, and dry up the tears of those who weep for its fall.”

*From New-York:* “I have just learned of the destruction, by fire, of your venerable St. Philip's Church. I feel as if I should sympathize with you in the loss of an object of holy and deserved affection, and do so most sincerely. From all I have ever heard of that building, I have represented it to my mind as a sort of personification of the venerable and time-honoured character of the spiritual edifice of which it was one of the most stable and efficient props and supporters. It has gone. May God give the comforting and sustaining influences of his grace to all who are most nearly concerned in this his afflictive dispensation, and cause them yet to see that in the merciful issue of his dealings, there is love more than sufficient to counterbalance all his judgments!”

*Another from New-York:* “I have just crept to my study from a sick bed, and avail myself of the opportunity to express to you my sympathy in the dreadful calamity with which God in his good providence has visited your own heart and the whole Church of South-Carolina!” \* \* \* “The venerable mother who for many generations has trained sons and daughters for heaven, has in one moment, as it were, crumbled to ashes! How impressive the reflection! How difficult for us to realize, who a few months since left her as fresh and strong as in her very youth, and standing a monument as imperishable as *matter*, of the piety of other days! Like myself, I suppose *nobody* ever thought of the *possibility* of the Church being destroyed, or it would have been covered by insurance. I pray you to let me know how your Committee speeds with its collections—who are the largest contributors, &c. &c. God can again raise her from the dust of the earth, with renewed strength for her conflicts with impurity and error!”

*From Homer, N. Y.:* "The account of the afflictive event of the 15th ult., by which the Church of St. Philip's has been laid in ruins, reached us last week. In behalf of my congregation, I tender to you and your parishioners our heartfelt sympathy and regret. As a very slight token of that sympathy, the collection made in our Church, (five dollars,) on the last Lord's day, is appropriated to aid you in the rebuilding of your Church."\*

*From Philadelphia:* "It is impossible for me to express to you the feelings of consternation, astonishment and regret, which I experienced on hearing the heart-rending intelligence of the destruction of our venerable and beloved Church, and I found it difficult to realize in my mind the certainty of the melancholy truth, so impregnable did that noble pile appear to be, both in the sacredness of its character, and the solidity of its structure. But alas! what work of human skill or power is proof against the mighty elements when let loose by him who alone holds them in his hand, and says to each, thus far shalt thou go, and here shalt thou be stayed. Nor can I better convey to you in words my deep feelings of sympathy and condolence in the too just grief which doubtless oppresses equally the pastors and the people, on the occasion of this afflictive event. The only consolation I can find or offer in the view of this providential judgment, (and in which you no doubt have anticipated me,) is in the example of good old Eli, 'It is the Lord, let him do what seemeth him good!' And which of us can doubt that it meant for *good!* If this event, disastrous as it seems, should be the means, as it probably may, of awakening and softening hearts hitherto cold and obdurate, and of deepening and perpetuating in others the salutary impressions previously received, and thus of winning souls to God, who would not count it a blessing? The counsels and admonitions of a beloved friend return with double power when the lips that breathed them are sealed in death. And it is possible that the smoking ruins may re-inforce in the hearts of some, to their good, the faded impressions once made by those hallowed walls in the days of their glory. However, you will join me I know, in hoping for the best, and the comforting assurance that the issues are in the hands of him who ordereth all things well. I cannot conclude without begging leave to offer my mite,† as an humble tribute of affection to the memory of our revered sanctuary, and my fervent prayers that the glory of the second temple may equal that of the former."

As some time must elapse before the Church can be rebuilt, a temporary building was commenced on the 30th of March, and it is hoped, will be ready for public worship in six weeks. It is 100 feet by 40, will have a gallery at each end, and cost about \$1500. It is to stand in the middle of the grave-yard, west of the ruin.

\* Of this Congregation, limited in numbers and means, testimony has been publicly given, and by the highest ecclesiastical authority, that they uniformly give in aid of the institutions of the Protestant Episcopal Church, to the full extent of their ability. The members of St. Philip's Church will value highly their token of sympathy on this occasion. We have no doubt it was accompanied with prayer, that like the widow's mite it will bring a blessing with it, and therefore will be more intrinsically valuable than the largest gift not so accompanied. They are the only congregation which up to this date have contributed any thing for the rebuilding of St. Philip's Church.

† The letter inclosed \$100.

*Domestic and Foreign Missionary Society of the P. E. Church.*—The *Missionary Record* for March contains reports from the missions in Ohio, Tennessee, and Illinois. From the last named we extract: “The population of the State must have increased the last year, by emigration, at least 100,000. The advantages of the country justify such emigration. It will therefore continue, in all human probability, for several years to come. Who will come to preach to these wandering multitudes, the majority of whom are poor, the unsearchable riches of Christ? Who will aid in establishing the Church in this fair portion of the earth, which shall stand as a wall of defence against the arrows and the false doctrines that are pouring in upon us like an overwhelming flood?” \* \* \* “There is still a fearful amount of vice and irreligion. The country affords great advantages for speculating and amassing wealth, and in the pursuit of this all the faculties of the soul seem to be absorbed.”

The Missionary in Greece writes: “In about a week we are to commence printing the Bible in Turkish, with Greek characters, for the Greeks of Asia Minor. It will be a heavy work, of two large 8vo, or one large 4to. volume. It will thus hardly answer the very desirable end of becoming a common school book. Now I intend, as soon as we can get a little under way with the printing, to make a series of selections so as to form a good sized 12mo. volume, to be distributed widely among the schools. There is a great want of all books necessary for the illustration of the scriptures in Greece and the east, and if we do not get proper ones in vogue, the probability is, that they will sooner or later be supplied with those which are not according to the truth, and the reformation of these churches may thus be very long greatly impeded. Arrangements will soon be made for a more extended and systematic theological education. How desirable then that suitable books, such as without offending prejudice, teach nothing but gospel truth, should be of easy access. In this way nearly all the schools of Greece use missionary books. Others are not easily to be had, and ours are therefore adopted.”

Three of the congregations in Philadelphia, (Epiphany, Grace and St. Paul's,) have generously made a pledge each to support with a salary of \$250, a missionary for Illinois, Ohio, and Missouri.

The collections for the month are \$3025, of which from South-Carolina, \$79.

The *Record* for April states, at Key West, “The services have been held in the court-house, and are very well attended. The number of persons generally present is estimated at 100 to 150. The congregation is composed of the white population of the key, some U. S. soldiers and a number of coloured persons. Most of the latter are from the Bahama Islands, and have been accustomed to the services of the Church of England.” \* \* \* “The fourth Sunday after my arrival a baptism was appointed, and I had the interesting duty to perform of administering this rite to sixteen children. On Christmas-day, I baptized one adult, and administered the communion to nine persons, four of whom had never before been admitted to this ordinance. The room in which we assemble for worship, was decorated on this occasion with the plants of a tropical climate, which made a very imposing appearance; but what rendered the day more interest-

ing was the fact, that this was the first time the communion was ever administered in this place. A Sunday School was immediately organized, and there are now eight teachers and fifty scholars, most of whom are regular attendants."

From the Rev. Mr. Hill at Athens: "While I was at Napoli, in August, I had the pleasure of meeting Captain Ballard and other officers of the United States frigate. Among these officers was the Rev. C. S. Stewart, the chaplain." \* \* \* "I may speak of the value of that judicious system of religious teaching which has been adopted on board this ship, because I was myself most forcibly struck with its evident effect upon the whole ship's crew. The first evening after our departure, I was conversing on the poop-deck with captain Ballard, when, after a certain signal, I observed the silent and respectful approach of large groups of the men to the quarter deck. There was no noise, no confusion, but a sober and even serious aspect among them all, as they arranged themselves in a very informal but not confused manner, around the capstan. I was not aware of what was to follow, and looked at the procedure with some surprise. Presently the solemn strains of the beautiful air, 'Portuguese hymn,' were heard from the full band, stationed near where I stood. All uncovered immediately; when they ceased, I heard the voice of prayer from Mr. S. whom I had not before seen, as his person was hid from me by the intervening mast. The prayer was short but very appropriate, simple and fervent. During the prayer, I looked upon the assembly beneath, and was deeply struck with the air of true devotion which all exhibited. Never shall I forget this interesting spectacle. A young English gentleman, was standing by my side, I saw him melted in tears as he stood surveying this unexpected scene. The prayer finished, again the solemn strains were renewed; and when these died away, the whole assembly broke up, retiring in the same respectful order in which they came. 'Is this something extra,' said I to captain B., 'perhaps because it is Saturday evening?' 'Oh no,' he answered, 'it is never omitted at sea or in harbour, except in stormy weather.' Well then, thought I, now I see the spring of the harmony and discipline which has so much struck me on board this vessel. Mr. N., my young friend, told me, he had never been more seriously affected in all his life."

The monthly collections amounted to \$1,984, of which only \$96 from South-Carolina.

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*Louisiana.*—A Convention (we believe the first,) of the Protestant Episcopal Church in this State, was held at Christ Church, New-Orleans, on the 20th of January, present, 3 clergymen and 4 laymen. A constitution for the diocese was adopted, and two canons passed. It appears that there are in Christ Church, 70 communicants, and fifty Sunday scholars. It was resolved "That the French Evangelical Church, in this city, on acceding to the constitution and canons of the Protestant Episcopal Church in the State of Louisiana, be admitted into union with this convention under the name of the 'Church *De La Résurrection*, in the city of New-Orleans.'

A convention of delegates from the dioceses of Mississippi, and Alabama, and from Christ Church New-Orleans, was held on the 4th

and 5th of March, and elected the Rev. Dr. F. L. Hawkes, Bishop. No clergyman of Louisiana, nor lay delegate from any other parish than Christ Church was present, and therefore it has been made a question whether the election is canonical.

*The Methodists and the Church of England.*—The important question as to whether the dissenters may expect co-operation from the Wesleyan Methodists in their present attempt to sever the Church establishment from the state, has been set at rest by an official declaration on the part of that large and powerful body, that their feelings are friendly to the establishment. The late Rev. John Wesley, would never allow or sanction the title "dissenter," to be applied to his members, nor would he permit his places of worship to be under the designation, "Church or Meeting-house;" and it must be well remembered by many of his hearers, that during his regular visits to this city, (Bristol,) in the months of March and September, his "New Room, Broadmead," (as it was then called,) was open for public worship on Sabbath day meetings, and the service strictly in accordance with the ritual of the established Church, and performed only by himself, his brother, or by a regular ordained clergyman; and on his return to London that service was dispensed with during his absence; the place of worship closed in Church hours, and his own preachers were expected to pay their devotions in the national Church, which was generally complied with.—*Churchman.*

*Presbyterians and Church of England.*—The following is now in the course of being signed in Liverpool: "We, the undersigned, Ministers, Elders, and others, members of the Established Presbyterian Church of Scotland, residing in this town and neighborhood, consider it an imperative duty, at the present crisis of public affairs, to make the following declaration:

"That differing more or less in our religious doctrines with the English Dissenters of all denominations, and holding in great abhorrence the tenets of the sect generally styled Presbyterians, whether Unitarians, Socinians, or Arians, we particularly disagree with the whole of them, by upholding, as we do, the vital importance of a national Establishment for the maintenance and increase of pure and undefiled religion.

"That we consider the Established Church of England, in doctrine, as one of the most pure and undefiled of the Christian Churches.

"That we regard her as the noblest ally of our own national Church, in the defence of the bulwarks of Protestantism against our impure, insatiable, common adversary.

"That we reverence her, as having furnished more than any Church whatever, in her authors, the most successful champions of the cross of CHRIST, against infidel writers.

"And that we should account as a calamity to the whole Christian world, the spoliation of the Church of England, or its overthrow as the national Church of the greatest portion of the British empire."

*Observance of the Lord's day.*—"Sixty-six parishes, (that is, very near one half of the parishes in Derbyshire,) have their Sabbath associations, and it is calculated that by means of the various meetings,

at least, 14,000 people in the country have had the whole subject of Sabbath observance and Sabbath desecration brought before them. Nearly all the persons connected with posting-houses in the country, to the number of 226, have petitioned both Houses of Parliament. About 100 of the canal people have petitioned against Sunday traffic on the canals; 87 of the bakers and butchers, for a more strict law relative to their trades; and there is now in the course of signature, a petition from the publicans of the town and neighbourhood of Derby."

*Derby Mercury.*

*The example of Bishop Leighton.*—It is said of him that "the Sabbath was his day of delight, and he would repair to God's house with a willing spirit even when his body was infirm." One rainy Sunday when he was unwell, he persisted in attending Church, and said, in excuse of his apparent rashness, "Were the weather fair I would stay at home, but since it is foul, I must go, lest I be thought to countenance by my example, the irreligious practice of letting trivial hindrances keep us back from public worship.

*Pious Liberality.*—Extract of a recent letter, dated Liverpool, Ohio, from an aged English lady: "It is some years since I left my native country, and now that I am in my 74th year, I think I must leave this State, for we have neither Clergyman or Church here. Without the public means of grace I cannot be happy. O! dear sir, can I at my great age give up the blessed Church? Can I now give up the holy Church! the sublime liturgy? I would engage to give a Clergyman \$300 a year for three years certain, or \$100 with a farm. I cannot doubt that many will contribute something towards his support."

*Pro. Epis. Society for the Advancement of Christianity in So. Ca.*

The Librarian reports the following donations to the Library:

*From Mr. M Farlane.*—Humphrey's Historical Account of the Incorporated Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts. Loud. 1730.

*From James Calder, Esq.*—Theological Library, 5 volumes, containing Luther's Life of Wicliff, Life of Archbishop Cranmer.

*Parish Library of St. Philip's Church.*

The Librarian reports the following donations:

*By Dexter Leland, A. B.*—Secrets of Female Convents disclosed," and the 18th and 21st report of the British and Foreign Bible Society.

*By Miss E. Mathews.*—Gospel Messenger, for 1829, complete, and for 1837, 8 nos., 1825, 10 do., 1830, 11 do., 1831, 5 do., 1832, 6 do., 1833, 9 do., 1834, 10 do.

**CALENDAR FOR APRIL.**

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|------------------------------|------------------------------|
| 5. Fifth Sunday in Lent.     | 18. Easter Even.             |
| 12. Sunday before Easter.    | 19. Easter Day.              |
| 13. Monday before Easter.    | 20. Monday in Easter-Week.   |
| 14. Tuesday before Easter.   | 21. Tuesday in Easter-Week.  |
| 15. Wednesday before Easter. | 25. St. Mark.                |
| 16. Thursday before Easter.  | 26. 1st Sunday after Easter. |
| 17. Good Friday.             |                              |